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The Wrecking Crew

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Harvey Kubernik reports on the making of the new film that tells their story

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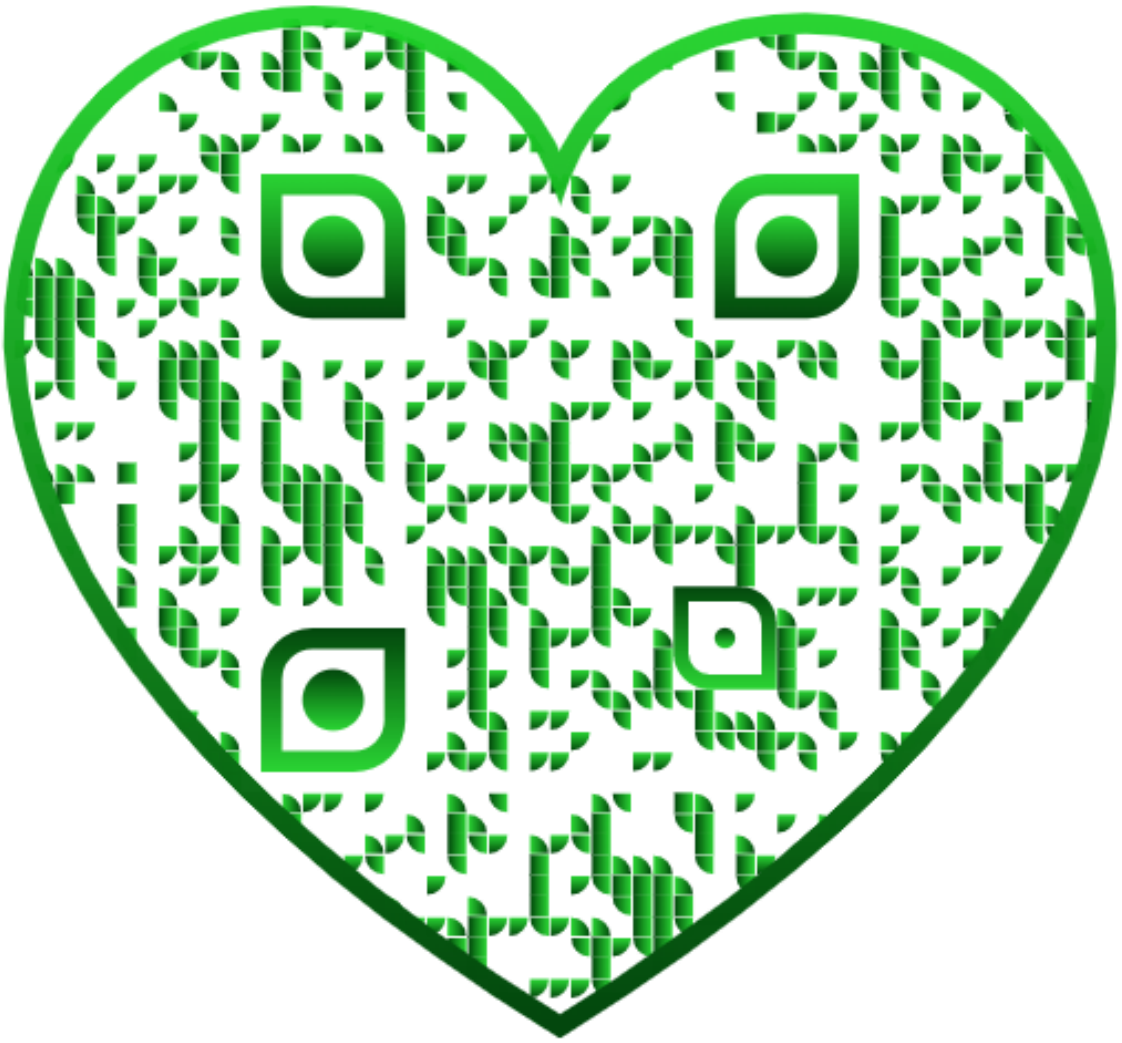

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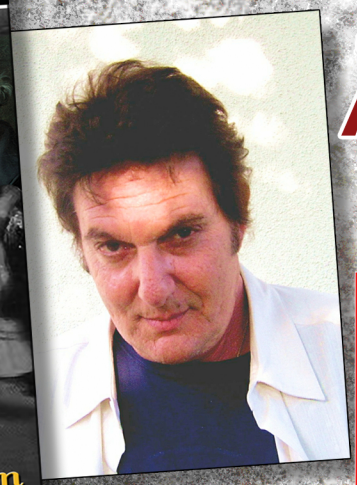

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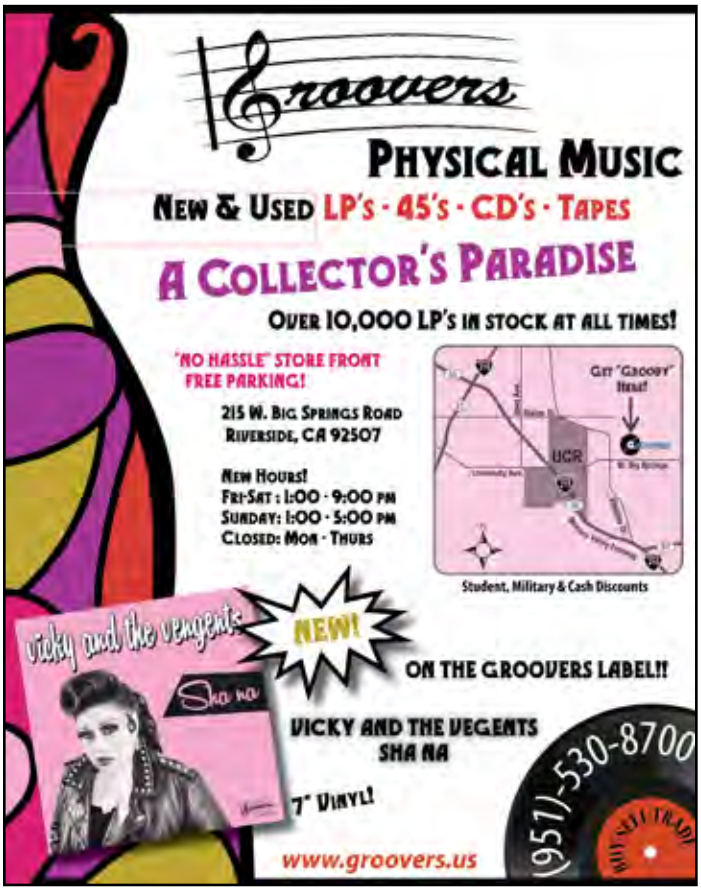

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CONTRIBUTORS
Lance Baresi, Wendy Block, Greg Burk, Deke Dickerson, Maya Eslami, Michael Fremer, Gillian G. Gaar, Cary Ginell, Ralph Hulett, Seth Kasselman, Harvey Kubernik, David Lancon, Dennis Leonis, Armand Lewis, Amy Lyons, Greg McWhorter, Richard Morris, Mike Nipper, Peter Palmiere, Steve Propes, Suzanne Rush, Robby Russell, Michael Sigman, Neal Skok, Dean Smokoff, Sean Sprinkel, David Thomson, Richie Unterberger, Jeb Woodhouse, Tony Scott Zubia
Japanese Translation: Keiko Thang

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ADVERTISING
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EDITORIAL / CALENDAR
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EMAIL
jim@recordcollectornews.com

WEBSITE
recordcollectornews.com

ADDRESS
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Burbank, CA 91505

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Free from the shackles of time"
—Paul Simon, *So Beautiful or So What*

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Has RSD become Corporate Record Label Day?

CHRISTMAS IN APRIL

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, RECORD Store day, is the best thing that has happened to independent record stores in the last 8 years. Ok, Adele sold a lot of records, which was great but...the word from record store owners is that sales were better when there were fewer releases. Yet, they can be assured of one of their busiest days of the year.

Suggestion. Get an extra cash register for the weekend. Hire some extra help and quit complaining that the records wind up on eBay that night. And, of course, have a bitchn' time.

THE RECORD STORE BOOK —SIGNED!

DON'T MISS MIKE SPITZ AND Rebecca Villaneda signing their unbelievably beautiful, superb coffee table book of Los Angeles Record Stores beautifully shot (on film) by Mike with descriptions by Rebecca at Jacknife Records and Tapes, 3149 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles, at 11am on Record Store Day. If you miss them at Jacknife, catch them at 2pm at Record Parlour, 6408 Selma Ave., Hollywood and the following weekend, Saturday, April 25th at Rockaway Records, 2395 Glendale Blvd., L.A. You want this book; It's destined to be a classic.

RECENT RECORDS

I HAVE TO ADMIT IT TOOK MY ears more than one listen for me to "get" **Bob Dylan's "Shadows in the Night"** on Columbia. When I first heard the first track, "The Night We Called it A Day," I thought to myself maybe, it's time for Bob to call it a day. (I just couldn't resist using that line. Sorry) I couldn't get through the first side. Then I thought, "It's Bob!" Sometimes Dylan drops a record and he doesn't drop it right into my lap. Sometimes, it's up to me to stretch my ears to get it so, I gave it another spin.

The second time, I didn't hear it the same way. Instead of Bob's voice I found myself listening to the sound of the emotion in his voice. It's as if he traded a pleasant melody for heart wrenching authenticity. From then on, the album just got deeper and deeper for me. Now, I'm completely sucked in. I've got it in the car, on the turntable and, on the phone. I sing along...when I'm alone; you wouldn't want two of us trying to find the key now, would you?

The musicianship is as compelling as ever yet, its Bobs interpretation of the songs that keeps me coming back. Something

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

as unique and precious as Bob Dylan don't need no auto-tune. In my humble, somewhat informed, completely biased opinion, this is up there with his best. Gimme more, Bob.

D'ANGELO AND THE VANGUARD'S BLACK MESSIAH? THAT'S RIGHT

I WAS BLOWN away when I saw D'Angelo perform on TV on the Grammys. So much so that I had to go out and buy his new record: **D'Angelo and the Vanguard's Black Messiah on RCA.**

I'm not disappointed. From Prince to D'Angelo, R&B is in fine shape. This guy cooks, rocks — is a real musician — and, the vinyl sounds stunning on the RCN World HQ reference audio system (Clearaudio Performance Turntable with Clearaudio Ebony MM cartridge and Zesto Andros 1.2 Phonostage, Jolida 801a integrated amp, WyWires speaker cable and Theil 2.3 speakers). Check it out!

STAYING IN THE GROOVE

IT MUST HAVE BEEN 1967 OR '68, when the needle didn't track and I Scotch-taped quarters onto the top of the cartridge to hold it in the groove. It seemed to do the job on my parents Magnavox console stereo. Now, I know that the jerry-rigged cure was slowly carving through my awesome, original vinyl. I don't recall how many records we used to stack at a time on the auto-changer. 5? 10? That also helped to imperceptibly damage them as they ground against each other.

Today, when I see people purchase $30 records to play on $90 record players, I have to remember, I screwed up my share of records so why shouldn't they?

Hope to see you at THE Show Newport May 28-31.

Happy listening.

Jim Kaplan

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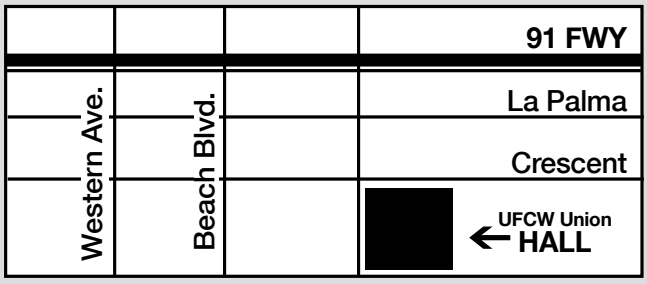

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY *THE WRECKING CREW*

Wrecking Crew guitarist Tommy Tedesco (center) and bassist Carol Kaye (right)

THE WRECKING CREW

During the 1960s, a group of Los Angeles studio musicians, known as "The Wrecking Crew," recorded hits for the Beach Boys, Frank Sinatra, Nancy Sinatra, Sonny and Cher, Jan & Dean, The Monkees, Mamas and Papas, Tijuana Brass, Ricky Nelson, Johnny Rivers — and they were Phil Spector's Wall of Sound. Now, director Denny Tedesco's documentary about these unseen players is finally coming to a theater near you.

BY HARVEY KUBERNIK

THE MOVIE *THE WRECKING CREW* FROM MAGnolia Pictures, tells the story of the unsung musicians in the Hollywood area who provided the backbeat, the bottom and the swinging melody that drove many of the number one hits of the 1960s. The Rock Beat label is also issuing a companion album of Wrecking Crew veterans.

The film documents their music-making regional studio work in Hollywood inside the immortal recording facilities like Gold Star, Radio Recorders, RCA, Wally Heider, United Western, Columbia and Sunset Sound.

It's a fun and moving tribute from Denny Tedesco to his father Tommy and to the music, the times and to the secret star-making machine who would be known as "The Wrecking Crew."

National screenings in North America are slated for the last part of March and all April, including dates in states California, Arizona, Washington, Texas, Missouri, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Louisiana, and Tennessee as well as VOD and iTunes.

Denny Tedesco and his dedicated team interviewed: Al Casey, Al Jardine, Bill Pitman, Bones Howe, Brian Wilson, Carmie Tedesco, Carol Kaye, Cher, Chuck Berghofer, Dave Gold, Dick Clark, Don Randi, Earl Palmer, Gary Lewis, Glen Campbell, Hal Blaine, Herb Alpert, Jimmy Webb, Joe Osborn, Julius Wechter, Larry Levine, Leon Russell, Lou Adler, Lew McCreary, Micky Dolenz, Nancy Sinatra, Peter Tork, Plas Johnson, Roger McGuinn, Snuff Garrett, Stan Ross, and Tommy Tedesco.

"I started this project in 1995 when my father, Tommy was diagnosed with terminal cancer," wrote Denny on his official Wrecking Crew website.

"I guess it was a way of me dealing with what was going in our lives and at the same time wanting to let the world know about what impact he and his friends made in musical history. I was so determined at first to actually say to in the interviews, 'please say 'Tommy' instead of your dad.' I really wanted to keep myself out of the picture but in the end, I came around and embraced it.

"The hard part was to telling the story of the 'Wrecking Crew' and at the same time telling my father's story. Finally a friend mentioned to me that you really couldn't tell one and not the other, so you might as well literally acknowledge it. Once we did that, it was easier and felt right. "You have to realize, these guys and Carol, the only woman, were at the top of their game at the right place and at the right time. They really don't have much to complain about. My dad was thrilled to be able to make a living at guitar. To make a living at an instrument puts you in a small minority. But to record as many hits as they did, they were even part of a smaller minority.

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"So when years pass by and you still have your chops as a musician and you're wondering why no one is calling, I think it takes its toll. Everyone has it in every career. Sometimes you last longer than others and some take it better than others. My father always said he was like a baseball player. You have your time in the minors, you make it to the majors and then you slowly move on out while the new guys come in. That's how he broke in. It's part of the cycle."

"We created a lot of music that became renewable copyrights just by what we played." Mike Melvoin told journalist, Kirk Silsbee earlier this century.

"Sometimes they'd put a lead sheet in front of you that just had a few basic chords, and we brought that stuff to life and made music out of it. Many times, people booked sessions and they didn't have the faintest idea of what they wanted. The L.A. studios had the reputation of being able to interpret and create any kind of music and sounds that you wanted."

The magic happened at Goldstar Studios

"There was very little overdubbing done then," engineer/producer Al Schmitt mentioned to me in a 2002 interview. "The nice thing about doing everything at one same time was that you knew exactly what it was going to sound like. When you started layering things you were never sure. Then a lot of experimenting came in and it took longer and longer to make records and the expenses went up and up."

I've been writing about the Wrecking Crew and the Gold Star principals for over 40 years in articles long before it was fashionable.

When they first were booked into the studios around Hollywood, they really weren't collectively referred to as the Wrecking Crew. They were known as Musician Local 47 members.

My 2014 book, *Turn Up The Radio! Rock, Pop, and Roll In Los Angeles 1956-1972* (Santa Monica Press) devotes chapters to many involved in those landmark sonic creations.

"I did various recordings with the session musicians and the players later to be heralded as the Wrecking Crew," added the recently departed but still omnipresent, Kim Fowley. "Al Casey was the real Duane Eddy. Tommy Tedesco. Aggressive on a Lee J. Cobb level during the filming of On the Waterfront. Carol Kaye was everybody's favorite schoolteacher and big sister. Cher was

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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everybody's fantasy.

"Don Randi did not look down at you playing on rock 'n' roll recordings, even though he was a jazz genius. Earl Palmer was a gentleman and very helpful to young producers. Glen Campbell wore alpaca sweaters and was very efficient. Hal Blaine would always come an hour early to set up, so no time would be wasted. Joe Osborn was a genius bassist from the Dale Hawkins band. Plas Johnson and Jackie Kelso were supportive to young musicians and new producers. And arranger H. B. Barnum. Extremely talented. He played piano on a record by the Robins and worked with singer Oma Heard, who I cut in my West Coast doo-wop period. Jack Nitzsche used to do my lead sheets for ten dollars on onion skin paper."

"The thing that struck me most about the session players—I was amazed that grown men, smartly dressed in beach costumes, would be playing good rock 'n' roll," remarked musician/broadcaster/ and author Ian Whitcomb in my book.

"Because, in England, there was nobody who specialized in that. A mixed group in age and color. But what impressed me was here were adults playing rock 'n' roll, and playing it well. It was like their first language. They were good musicians who could read music, but they could also play freely.

"I got in there as a neophyte, and there was this array of really

Ray Pohlman and Sammy Davis, Jr.

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smartly dressed, really slick men with fabulous haircuts and sideburns, all wearing velour and had tight trousers that were tapered down. Nothing like I had seen in England or the East Coast. Now it turned out, these were the members of what would later be called the Wrecking Crew."

"Gold Star's echo chamber gave it the wall of sound feel," admitted Gold Star co-owner Stan Ross to me during a 2002 interview published in Goldmine magazine.

"Dave (Gold) built the equipment and echo chamber and personally hand-crafted the acoustical wall coating. We had so much fun with that echo chamber; it never sounded the same way twice. Gold Star brought a feeling, an emotional feeling. Gold Star was not a dead studio, but a live studio. The room was 30' x 40'.

"It was all tubes," he instructed. "When you have tubes, you have expansion and it doesn't distort so easy. We kept tubes on longer than anyone else. Because we understood that when a kick drum kicks into a tube it's not gonna distort. A tube can expand. The microphones with tubes were better than the ones without the tubes because if you don't have a tube and you hit heavy, suddenly it breaks ups. But when you have a tube it's warm and emotional. It gets bigger and it expands. It allows for the impulse. And, we didn't use pop filters and wind screens, we got mouth noises. Isn't that life?"

I recorded with the Wrecking

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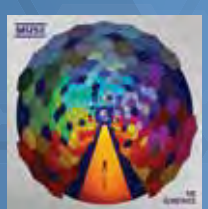

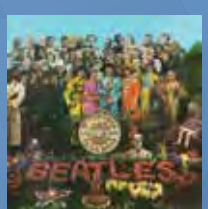

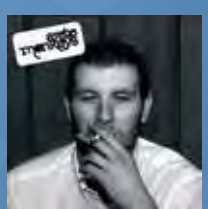

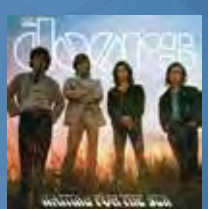

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Dean Martin with Glen Campbell (right)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

Crew a handful of times during 1978. On one session I provided percussion and banged tambourine along with Rodney Bingenheimer and Phil Seymour on what many consider the very last time Phil Spector assembled the Wrecking Crew.

It was for a Paley Brothers' recording track for "Baby, Let's Stick Together," cut at Gold Star that Larry Levine engineered.

Bingenheimer and I also hand clapped during tracking dates on the Spector-produced *End of The Century* Ramones' album at Gold Star. In 2002 I penned the liner notes to a deluxe CD of *End of The Century*.

"I used to have a theory," the late Larry Levine confided to me in 2002, "and I don't know if it's right or wrong, but part of the reason we took so long in actually recording the songs was that Phil needed to tire out the musicians, or they got to the point where they were tired enough so they weren't playing as individuals. But they would meld into the sound more that Phil had in his head."

"I grew up going to Gold Star and Wrecking Crew recording sessions with my dad, Barney Kessel (guitar) and my stepmother B.J. Baker (vocal contractor/background singer), who were both on all kinds of records with the Wrecking Crew," offered musician/producer and deejay, David Kessel.

"I was impressed as a kid how these guys could construct a record in the studio, and then I'd hear it on the radio. I had the privilege of growing up to be 2nd generation, playing on lots of records produced by Phil Spector. This includes recordings with John Lennon, Harry Nilsson, Cher, Celine Dion, Darlene Love, Leonard Cohen, Dion, and the Ramones," Kessel continued.

"What a complete profession thrill it was to work with the best of the best of musicians. The Wrecking Crew had a mixture of Rock and Jazz musicians that could almost read each other's minds. This included Hal Blaine, Don Randi, Terry Gibbs, Tommy Tedesco, Don Peake, Jim Keltner, Frankie Capp, and host of greats.

"The Wrecking Crew were the best of the best, if you wanted a great record. I can hear my dad and Hal Blaine all over The Beach Boys *Pet Sounds* and hundreds of other records.

"A lot of the sessions I attended as a kid and started playing on as a teenager we're done at Gold Star Studios in Hollywood. One funny thing really blew my mind. If anybody got a sexually transmitted issue (the story to the wife or girlfriend), was that they would always blame it on the bathroom at Gold Star. Which wasn't true of course," David laughed.

"It is with much positive emotion and appreciation, that I'm happy *The Wrecking Crew* movie, directed by Denny Tedesco is having a theatrical release. What a rare group of recording musicians."

"We were doing a job," admitted Hal Blaine. "We used to say: TTMAR. Take the money and run," he joked. "Nobody knew how long it would last. The Wrecking Crew could lock in with anybody. When we finished we had to go out and do another session. I might have had two other gigs that day. Our job was making hit records and we loved it," enthused Blaine.

"Larry Knechtel was on bass, and one of the great keyboardists. He played guitar, too. The guitarist Mike Deasy was a later day Wrecking Crew member. He was our mystical guru of guitar sounds when psychedelia entered the recording studio world," noted Blaine.

"After being a member of both Kaleidoscope and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, I began working as a sideman for Linda Ronstadt, John Stewart and Hoyt Axton," recollected instrumentalist/songwriter Chris Darrow.

"During this period I ended up doing a lot studio work in Hollywood and Los Angeles with Stewart and Axton as well as James Taylor, John Fahey and many others. As a member of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 47, I would have to call and see if the money from the sessions had come in. If so, I would drive to the office on Vine Street with copies of my W-2 forms and pick up the checks. Since I lived an hour away in Claremont, rush hour became an issue for me.

"One day I went to the Union and the check line was pretty short, so I was all ready to go visit a friend of mine until the traffic cleared. I was third in line and noticed that the person in front of me was the great drummer, Hal

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

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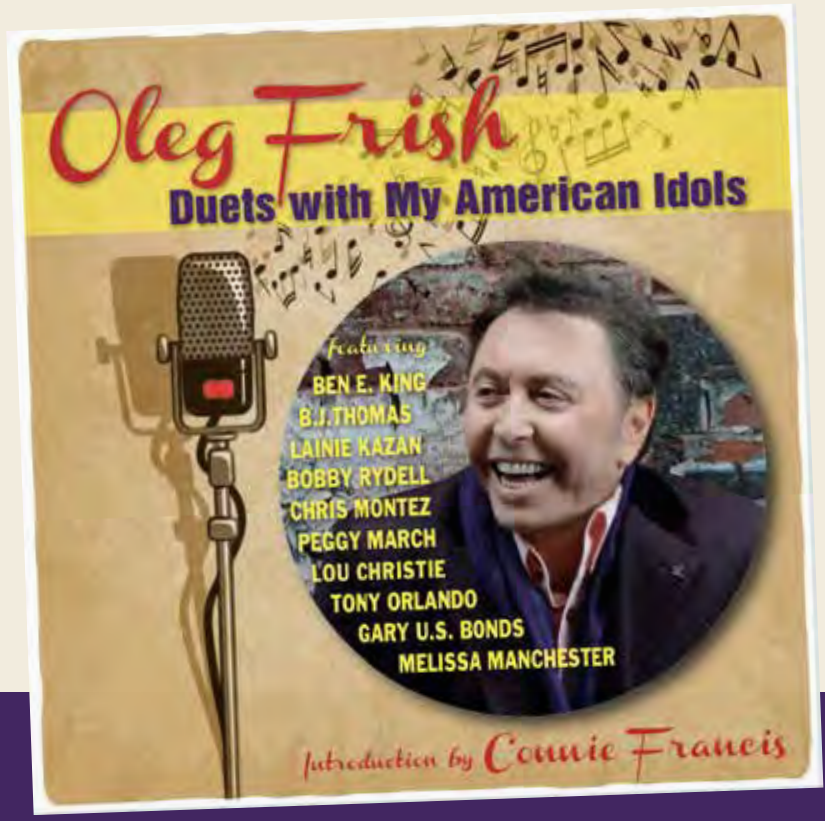

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"Oleg helps many of us to make dreams come true. I always did rock n rolls and original music and never recorded standards before. This CD is a real and big deal"

Lou Christie

"It is a pleasure to know that someone who was born overseas, loves American music and sings joyfully. It is a pleasure to record with Oleg Frish, who is undoubtedly one of the terrific performers and great entertainers."

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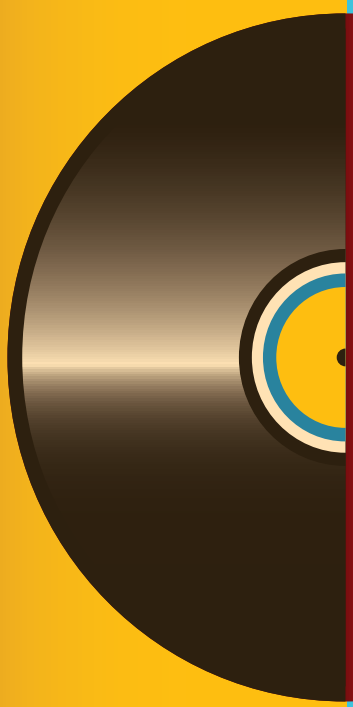

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PHOTO BY STEPHEN PALEY

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

Blaine. The first guy in line picked up his check and was out in a flash. When it was Blaine's turn, he pulled out a big stack of W-2s and laid them out on the counter. It took over 20 minutes for him to go through all the checks he was going to get that day. That's how popular he was! I picked up my two checks and was out of there in no time."

Bassist Chuck Berghoffer formerly worked with Shelley Manne and Pete Jolly. He's featured on Nancy Sinatra's signature tune "These Boots Are Made For Walkin' and heard on the Elvis Presley '68 Comeback Special.

"Tommy Tedesco had the most common sense of anyone I ever met. Musically he could read and play anything. But he had the greatest attitude. He taught us all how to handle this stuff.

"In Jazz I play a lot more notes in four bars than I would all day long with the other stuff. Jazz was more of an improvisation thing where you kind of do your own thing. This stuff was very structured. You follow the exact tune and play the roots. No fancy stuff at all. Just laying down the bottom, playing the roots simple. Let the man sing. With jazz it's a lot more open with solos."

"If you ask me what I did to inform or benefit the records I would say you can make records but you can't make records with any kind of feel unless the musicians are comfortable where they are in the rooms," detailed engineer/record producer Bones Howe, a guiding force of the Radio Recorders, Wally Heider, and United/United Western studios to me in a 2012 interview. Howe, a drummer, came out to Hollywood in 1957 on the invite of Shelley Manne.

"When I did Ornette Coleman for Atlantic that Neshui Ertegin produced, they were so close to each other they could reach out and touch each other. Like they were on the bandstand at Shelley's Manne-Hole. That was the format. And then use the directional qualities of the microphones and as little baffling as possible but sometimes between the bass and drums. Just to let it be free and let the music be in the air. Instead of people being all the way across the room from somebody.

"I tried to find the real things I loved about a song and enhanced them. It was percussive in nature. The bass part on the Association's 'Windy' is partially percussion. A marimba in there. I'm sure the complex harmonies that ended up in the records that I made were all because of my jazz upbringing.

"One of the things I did was that I kept the musicians close together. It's hard to play jazz if you are all the way across the room from somebody. That I think was the one thing that kind of singled me out. When I first started I played in a band. I understood that people

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Noshing with The Crew

IT WAS ONLY IN THE LATER PART OF THE Sixties that professional catering and available food on premises, often on record label budgets, and being delivered into the studios, became a part of the production-recording scene and collaboration.

Don Randi headed the house band at Sherry's cocktail bar on Sunset Boulevard from 1957-1970, disclosed the Wrecking Crew's culinary habits and their favorite watering holes.

"Jack [Nitzsche] and I would go out to places like the Gaiety Delicatessen. Once in a while Harry Nilsson would come to our table. He was still working at the Crocker Citizen bank as a teller or had a job there. He might have made a record then.

"We loved Musso & Frank's Grill on Hollywood Boulevard and Johnny's Steak House. That was my savior. I didn't have a fuckin dime and I could go and have a three-dollar meal in there with a rib Eye, you know. Can't forget The Brown Derby. We went to Aldo's, great hamburgers. Sonny and Cher dug that place, Canter's, and once in a while, a coffee shop called Huff's. Taco-rama, and Pink's Hot Dogs on La Brea. Another tasty stop was The Dog House on Hollywood where you sat on stools right on the street.

"The Flying Saucer. The best French Dip sandwiches in town. Near Wilshire. There was Young China, two doors down from radio station KFWB for fantastic Chinese. On Hollywood Boulevard. The best Won Ton soup. The Italian restaurant Miceli's was on Las Palmas.

"Dennis Wilson loved Ah Fong's restaurant. Delicious Chinese-American food. Gene Norman owned the Marquis restaurant on Sunset Strip, along with his Crescendo and Interlude clubs. I liked the Villa Capri. Mickey Cohen was there on a regular basis. I saw him at Sherry's as well. There was Hal's Nest, and The Speak, where all drinks were 39 cents. Phil and I went to The Cock 'n Bull. The trout was incredible.

"The record company promo men all went to an Italian spot named Martoni's. Label owners [Verve Records] like Norman Granz enjoyed the Pacific Dining Car. Barney Kessel and his wife B.J. Baker requested their New York steaks cooked medium at Diamond Jim's in Hollywood.

"As you well know, we all went to the Hollywood Ranch Market. Are you kidding? The tater tots and the chicken gizzards! In the late fifties they had a donut machine there! [laughs]. I saw Lucille Ball one late night. In a full fur mink coat! She gave me the biggest smile. Rock bands, hookers, actors and hippies were at the counter.

"Myself, Jack, Neil [Young] and Denny [Bruce] also liked to eat at the House of Pancakes on La Cienega. They just closed Hamburger Hamlet on Sunset Boulevard! What the fuck is going on?"

Bill Pitman and Brian Wilson

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

had to be close. I figured out ways to use the directional qualities of the microphone so that I could have the horn players close to the rhythm section. I could have piano, bass and drums all close to each other. And that's the way I did it," dispersed Howe.

"So many recordings from the 1956 to 1972 time period had background vocalists as well. They were more than just coloring the recordings. Lead and background were really part of the records at the time. I mean all the group records I made were a lead and background. And the lead changed and so the background changed.

"When I was an engineer I was there to serve the producer and the music. I never lost touch of that. By the time they were done I could sing along with every record I made. I suppose what I did was that I did what I was told except I found ways to do it but I thought benefited the performance of the musicians in the studio."

GUITARIST DON PEAKE STUDIED WITH Barney Kessel, Howard Roberts and Joe Pass. Peake then toured with the Everly Brothers during 1961-1963, and became a first call guitarist for Phil Spector, Brian Wilson Sonny Bono, Barry White and Freddie Perren-produced recording sessions.

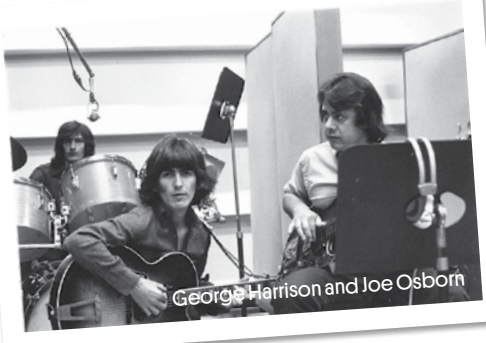
In 1964, Don became the first white guitarist to play and record with Ray Charles. That stint lasted for ten years. Peake arranged "If I Were a Carpenter" for Bobby Darin and is the lead guitarist on Marvin Gaye's "Let's Get It On."

Peake has arranged recording dates for Roy Orbison, Minnie Riperton, the Fifth Dimension and the Monkees.

"For the Monkees I hired Mike Deasy and Glen Campbell," mentioned Peake. "I'm the guy who hired Glen to come in. I'm still not sure as to who played the beginning lead on 'Mary, Mary.' I don't know if it was Glen or Mike Deasy. I think Jim Gordon was playing on some of those sessions.

"I had known Lester Sill, who helped put the music together for the Monkees, from years earlier, including playing on Phil Spector sessions," he volunteered.

"I believe that's the way it is in this industry, you know. There's a kind of a continuum and it's we're all on this kind of string. And we're the best of string that keeps the pearls that makes the necklace.


George Harrison and Joe Osborn

"On the Monkees' dates I would sometime pick up a guitar and sometimes I would not. But I was always the guy standing up on the podium. I was the leader. And Mike Nesmith depended upon me to communicate in musical terms and on paper what he could not. I was thrilled to be doing it with him.

"My life as an arranger and player is easier when the tune is good," concluded Peake. "And there were a lot of good tunes. Longevity has to do with the song. Yes, there are good performances and yes there are certain records where performance means a lot, but truly the thing that makes something memorable is the song. I had great fun on those sessions. I later played on the Jackson 5 records and then the Partridge Family."

"I was a spectator on some of the Sonny and Cher sessions," revealed the multi-instrumentalist and record producer Dan Kessel in *Turn Up The Radio!* "My dad doubled the bass on 'The Beat Goes On' for Sonny [Bono].

"Sonny and Cher would call my dad 'the professor.' He stood out from the mostly younger, California casual-dressed musicians. As a world-traveled jazz artist, with hipster-jazz beard and suits from Boshard-Doughty and Carroll and Co., he could easily pass for a Zurich psychiatrist.

"Many of the guys smoked a lot back then," stressed Dan, "but Sonny chain smoked to the degree that he always kept two cigarettes in his hand—the one he was smoking, and the next one he would soon be lighting with the one he was currently smoking. It was like one long, continuous cigarette throughout the session."

"I LIKE TO HAVE ALL THE MUSICIANS THERE at once," Phil Spector explained to me in 1975 during an interview for the weekly Melody Maker. "The better the talent is around you, the better the people you have working with

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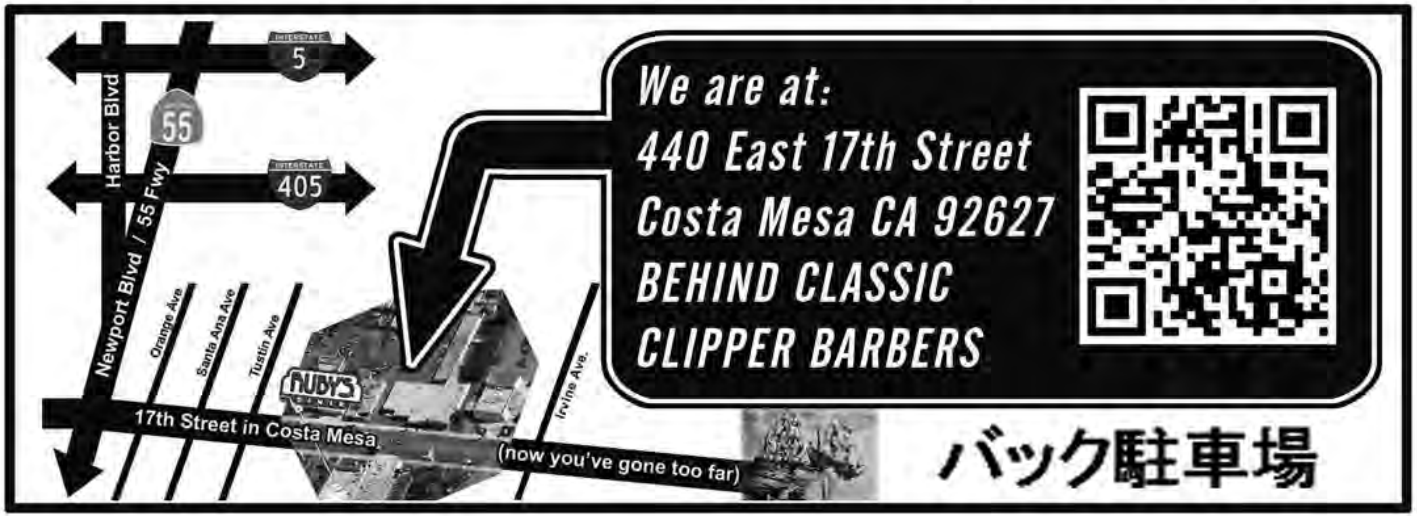

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you. The more concerned, the better you're gonna come off as a producer, like a teacher in a class. The musicians I have never outdo me. I'm not in competition with them. I'm in complete accord with them. You need the ability, so you hire the best. I have the creativity. I know what I want.

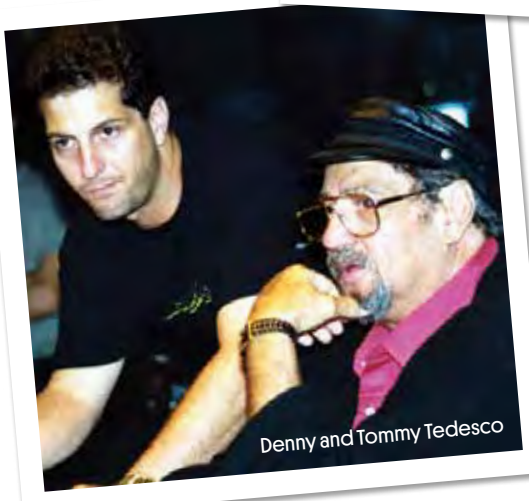
"When you see a Kubrick movie, you tell me how many names you immediately remember in the cast. One? Two? It's the same with Fellini, and that's what I wanted to do when I directed a recording. Singers are instruments. They are tools to be worked with," implied Spector.

"Let me tell you a story," Brian Wilson professed to me in a 2007 interview. "I went to Gold Star and asked Larry Levine, the engineer, 'What is the secret of the Phil Spector echo trip?' 'Well, we have two echo chambers under the parking lot. Phil uses both the chambers at the same time.'

"So I tried that myself and it worked. I also Larry Levine what Phil Spector did with his basses. Larry said Phil uses a standup and a Fender both at the same time. And the Fender guy used a pick. So I tried it out at my session and it worked great! You also get a thicker sound putting the two basses together. I start with drums, bass, guitar and keyboards. Then we overdub the horns and the background voices."

Herb Alpert and Julius Wechter

Larry Knechtel and Hal Blaine


Denny and Tommy Tedesco

"I met piano player Don Randi around 1960 at a club on La Cienega," recalled Jack Nitzsche. "He was cool. He looked like a beatnik. His hair was right. He had the attitude. He didn't smile when he played."

During 2014, I talked with Don Randi. For the last 45 years he's been the proprietor of The Baked Potato club. Randi's autobiography will be published in September by Hal Leonard.

"Most of the times when we did those studio jobs we were asked to be somebody else. We were cloned. You know, if somebody wanted Floyd Cramer you had to come out. If somebody wanted a more Ray Charles' sound you had to come up with it. If somebody wanted more of a Phil Spector sound then I knew exactly what they wanted. Tommy Tedesco is the master guitarist of everybody who had the capability of whatever he was doing sound better than what you ever expected.

"And, as great as it was, we were making up parts half the time. With Jack [Nitzsche], Phil [Spector] was able to go to Jack and he would translate what Phil wanted. There was camaraderie. You got to remember we all were together. Jack Nitzsche, Phil Spector, myself and Sonny Bono, who Jack knew from the late '50s at Specialty Records," underscored Randi.

"You know what kills me, every time I hear Jack's 'The Lonely Surfer.' I'm on it. It still gives me chills because it's a great song. Jack wrote a great song. I didn't hear it until the day we went in. You know, we never rehearsed. (laughs). The composition. I'll tell you what gripped me was his brilliance. And the smart producers realized that and they would put together some combinations that actually forced that because they wanted that edginess.

"Jack and I never judged artists by their voices. To me it didn't matter 'cause I loved the music so much. And Neil was able to sell it. There are some people you can't stand them on record until you see them live. And once you see them live you can understand their records. That doesn't happen a lot. But it does happen," Don maintained.

"You gotta remember, by 1967 some of the recording studios in town, like Columbia and Sunset Sound now had 8-track tape machines. When it happened I welcomed it but all I thought of at that point, 'well the studios are gonna get rich now.' Because nobody is gonna know how to mix this stuff.

"And when they mix it they're gonna have to come down to mono because nobody has got stereos to play it on. And guys like Jack and Neil with 8-track now had more options and tracks to fill. But what makes me wonder how did Brian [Wilson] do it on 4-track?"

In March 2015, a companion book to Denny Tedesco's film was published by Wreckling Crew LLC. *Sound Explosion! Inside L.A.'s Studio Factory with the Wrecking Crew* by Ken Sharp art design by Mark London and John Sellards. http://store.wreckingcrewfilm.com/

Harvey Kubernik, a Los Angeles native, has been a music journalist for over 42 years and author of eight books on rock 'n roll and popular culture

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Ciaramella: Dances on Moveable Ground

Yarlung adds another rung to the ladder of analog audio excellence

BY DAVID THOMSON

Ciaramella Ensemble for Music of the Centuries

RAISE YOUR HAND IF you have heard, never mind heard of, the theorbo, the shawm, or everyone's favorite, the sackbut.

These are but a few of the lost Baroque and Elizabethan instruments that Ciaramella brings to life to take us across Europe on an enchanted musical journey of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Don't jump to judgement: That doesn't mean that this platter doesn't rock. Falconieri's "L'Eroica" builds from a fugue to end with four-chord progression similar to Gene Chandler's 1961 hit, "Duke of Earl."

Indulge us as we quote the liner notes; "As a wild dance from the new world with syncopated rhythms and rousing speed, it held both devilish and sacred associations during the Baroque period. Known as the most sexually implicit of all the dances in seventeenth-century Spain, the *ciaconna* included graphic lyrics and suggestive hip gyrations and was consequently banned by the Church. If one were convicted of dancing the *ciaconna* during the Spanish Inquisition, one could be sentenced to 200 lashes. Naturally, the Church's antagonism greatly increased everyone's interest in this exotic dance."

You have been advised, listen at you own risk!

The album's sleeve also exposes, in absorbing detail, the "Grounds" – the pun in the album's title – a term depicting repeated chord progressions and melodies that lie at the heart of the music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods.

Ciaramella's musical directors, Adam Knight Gilbert and Rotem Gilbert's interpretation of these seemingly, familiar refrains, like the tease of the ubiquitous "Greensleeves," is comforting today. Improvisations with big chords compounded with modern rhythms offer a transmigration through music with deep Spanish, English, and Italian roots.

Our memories are also refreshed as the renditions use the more recognizable hurdy gurdy, the dulcian, Flemish bagpipes, the Baroque guitar, and various percussion instruments that sound as familiar as today's castanets.

What's equally fascinating is that many of these original acoustic instruments are not available anymore. So, to highlight a few, craftsman Paul Beekhuizen created his reproduction of the Flemish bagpipe based on Bruegel's engraving *The Fat Kitchen* while Joel Robinson built a different bagpipe by viewing Bruegel's, *The Peasant Dance*.

Yet, leave it to Yarlung to capture the sonic excellence of these unique instruments. Enter Yarlung recording engineer Bob Attiyeh." We chose microphone pre-amplification equipment designed and built for Yarlung by Elliot Midwood. Len Horowitz created our custom tube recording circuitry for the Yarlung analog tape recorder. It was all linked with short runs of silver stranded interconnects constructed by Yarlung. And, finally, the Austrian AKG C-24 stereo microphone was lent by our friend Jon Fisher at Gearworks Pro Audio."

That's right, ONE Microphone. When you hear this recording; the stereo separation, the deep soundstage and imaging of each instrument's presence separately floating in the air of your living room, you will not believe that they weren't mic'd and mixed independently.

Bob elaborated, "Instrument placement is everything. We had the good fortune to have access to Alfred Newman Hall on the USC campus so, we had a spacious setting with each musician separated by the distance required to simulate the soundstage presented on the recording. Not only that," Bob added with delight, "Each composition was caught in one take."

That's typical of the Yarlung mission; To find the world's greatest, unheralded musicians and unite them, in analog, with the most dedicated mastering engineers. Then, deliver to us neatly packaged CD and virgin vinyl formats that bend our belief system of what is sonically available from today's stereo systems.

The gifted Steve Hoffman's mastering technique is indelibly stamped on the vinyl version of the release.

The Absolute Sound recently awarded Yarlung's Emmy winning *Antonio Lysy: Music from Argentina* one of the Top 40 recordings of all time. *Ciaramella: Dances on Moveable Ground* should make their Top 10.

The beauty of this "historic" release is its distinct musical and sonic uniqueness. And, that it can be indulged from the comfort of your couch. Don't miss it.

Ciaramella's original members met as graduate students at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. They first played together on Christmas Day in 2003 and have since performed in concert halls and in music festivals on three continents. For more information about Ciaramella please visit yarlungrecords.com and ciaramella.org.

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– Michael Fremer, Stereophile, June 2012

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– Harry Pearson, the absolute sound, February 2012

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– the absolute sound: 2014 High-End Audio Buyer's Guide

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– Jacob Heilbrunn, theabsolutesound.com, February 2013

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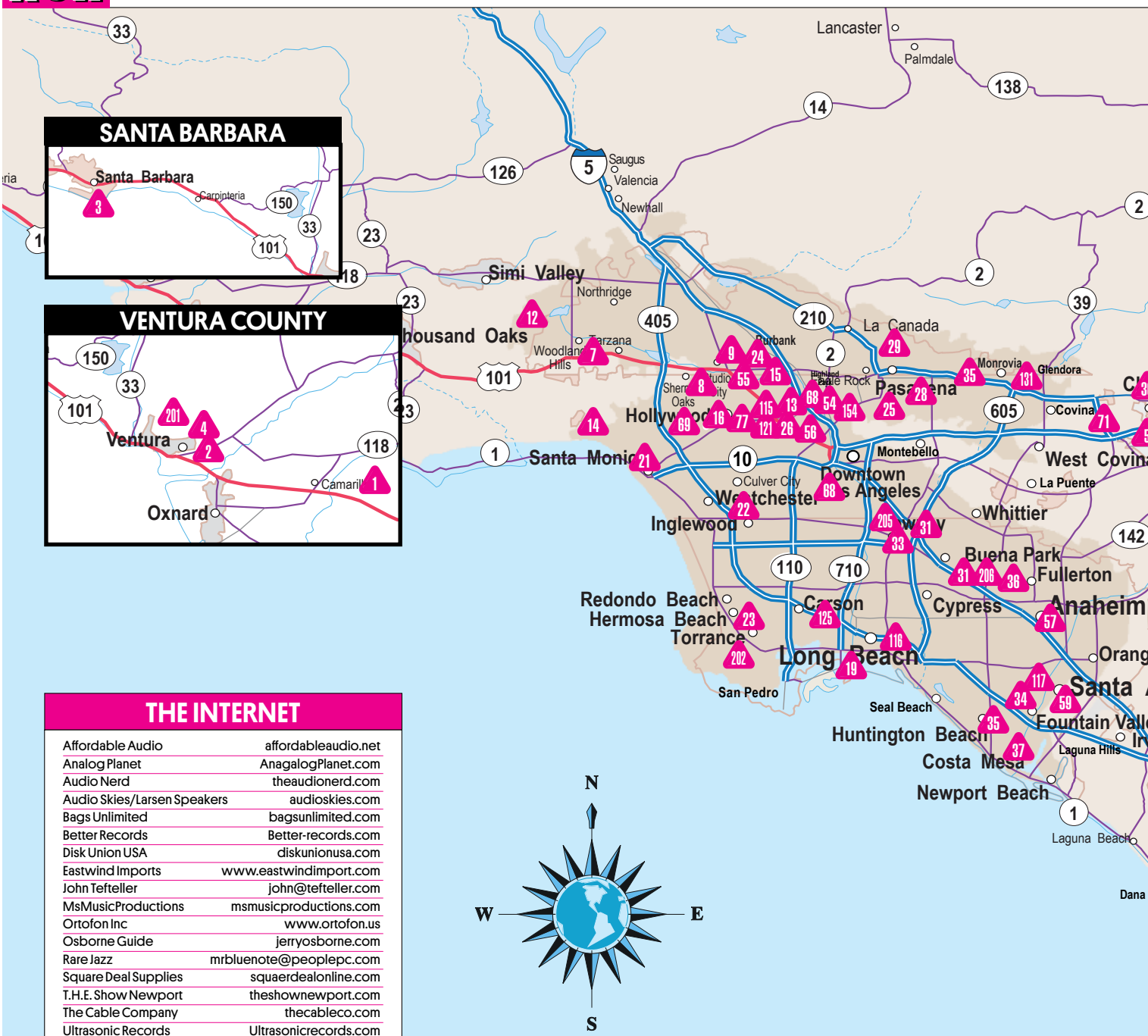

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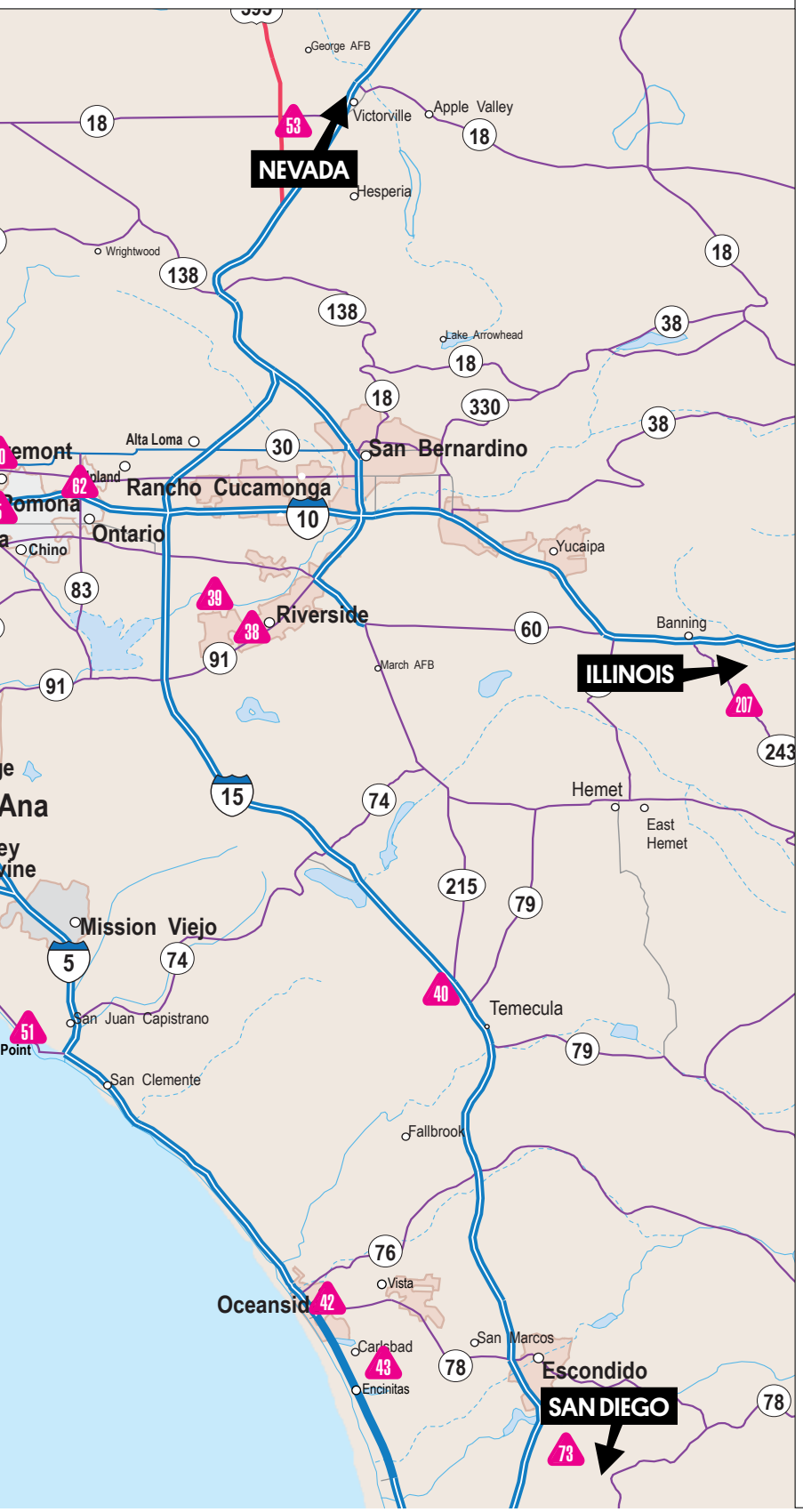

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1	Record Outlet	1489 E. Thousand Oaks Bl	Thousand Oaks	91360
2	American Pie Records	1412 Tower Square #2	Ventura	93003
3	Warbler Records	131 E. De La Guerra	Santa Barbara	93101
4	Grady's Record	2546 E. Main St	Ventura	93003
201	Jockamo Records	522 E. Santa Clara St	Ventura	93001

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY/BURBANK

7	CD Trader	18926 Ventura Bl	Tarzana	91356
8	FreakBeat Records	13616 Ventura Blvd	Sherman Oaks	91423
9	Atomic Records	3812 W. Magnolia	Burbank	91505
12	Shelley's Stereo	22102 Clarendon Street	Woodland Hills	91367
24	Backside Records	139 N. San Fernando Blvd	Burbank	91502

LOS ANGELES / SANTA MONICA

13	Mono Records	1805 Glendale Blvd	Los Angeles	90026
14	Record Surplus	12436 Santa Monica Blvd	W. Los Angeles	90025
55	Sick City Records	3323 W Sunset Blvd	Los Angeles	90026
26	Blue Bag Records	2149 Sunset Blvd	Los Angeles	90026
16	Amoeba Music	6400 Sunset Bl	Hollywood	90028
121	Ahead Stereo	7428 Beverly Blvd	Los Angeles	90036
15	Rockaway Records	2395 B Glendale Blvd	Silverlake	90039
77	Headline Records	7706 Melrose Ave	Los Angeles	90046
69	The Record Collector	7809 Melrose Ave	Los Angeles	90046
56	Caveman Vintage Music	650 N. Spring St	Los Angeles	90012
21	Angel City Records & Books	218 Pier Ave	Santa Monica	90405
54	Jacknife Records	3149 Glendale Blvd	Los Angeles	90039
154	Gimme Gimme Records	4628 York Blvd	Highland Park	90042
115	Vacation Vinyl	3815 W Sunset Blvd	Los Angeles	90029
68	High Fidelity	1956 Hillhurst Ave	Los Angeles	90027

LONG BEACH/SOUTH BAY

19	Bagatelle	260 Atlantic Ave	Long Beach	90802
22	Pacific Sound Service	408 E. Manchester Blvd	Inglewood	90301
23	PM Sounds	1115 Sartori Avenue	Torrance	90501
125	Fingerprints	420 E 4th Street	Long Beach	90802
202	The Grand Emporium	323 West 7th Street	San Pedro	90731
116	Toxic Toast Records	757 Pine Ave	Long Beach	90803

MID CITIES

25	Record Jungle	2459 Whittier Blvd	Montebello	90640
74	Sounds of Music E. LA	4956 Whittier Blvd.	Los Angeles	90044
205	Sounds of Music Paramount	7922 Rosecrans Ave #S	Paramount	90723

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY AREA

28	Pasadena City College [PCC]	1570 E. Colorado	Pasadena	91106
29	Audio Element	117 E Union St	Pasadena	91103
71	Kaos Records	1044 N Citrus	Covina	91722
35	Resistor Records	511 S. Myrtle	Monrovia	91016
131	Brooks Berdan	110 W Olive	Monrovia	91016

CLAREMONT / POMONA / ALTA LOMA

5	The Glass House Record Store	248 W 2nd Street	Pomona	91766
30	Rhino Records	235 Yale Ave	Claremont	91711
71	Zoinks Records	226 S Main St	Pomona	91766
62	Penny Lane Records	1551 W. 13th St. #107	Upland	91786

ORANGE COUNTY

31	Greater Orange County Record Show	8530 Stanton	Buena Park	90620
32	Burger Records	645a S. State College Blvd.	Fullerton	92831
33	Far West Record Supply	SEE OC Record Show	Buena Park	90620
57	Pepperland Music	850 N. Tustin St	Orange	92867
37	Factory Records	440 E 17th Street	Costa Mesa	92627
36	Black Hole Records	108 North Harbor Blvd	Fullerton	92832
117	Beatnik Bandito	417 N. Broadway St	Santa Ana	92701
59	Left of the Dial Records	320 French St Unit B	Santa Ana	92701
206	Bionic Records	6012 Ball Road	Buena Park	90620
34	TKO Records	21405 Brookhurst St	Fountain Valley	92646

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

38	Mad Platter	1223 University Ave	Riverside	92501
39	Groovers	215 W. Big Springs Rd.	Riverside	92507
40	Old Town Records	42012 Main Street	Temecula	92590

SAN DIEGO / COUNTY

42	Spin Records	370 Grand Ave	Carlsbad	92008
43	Lou's Records	434 N. Coast Highway 101	Encinitas	92024
73	Stereo Unlimited	3191 Sportsw Arena Blvd	San Diego	92110

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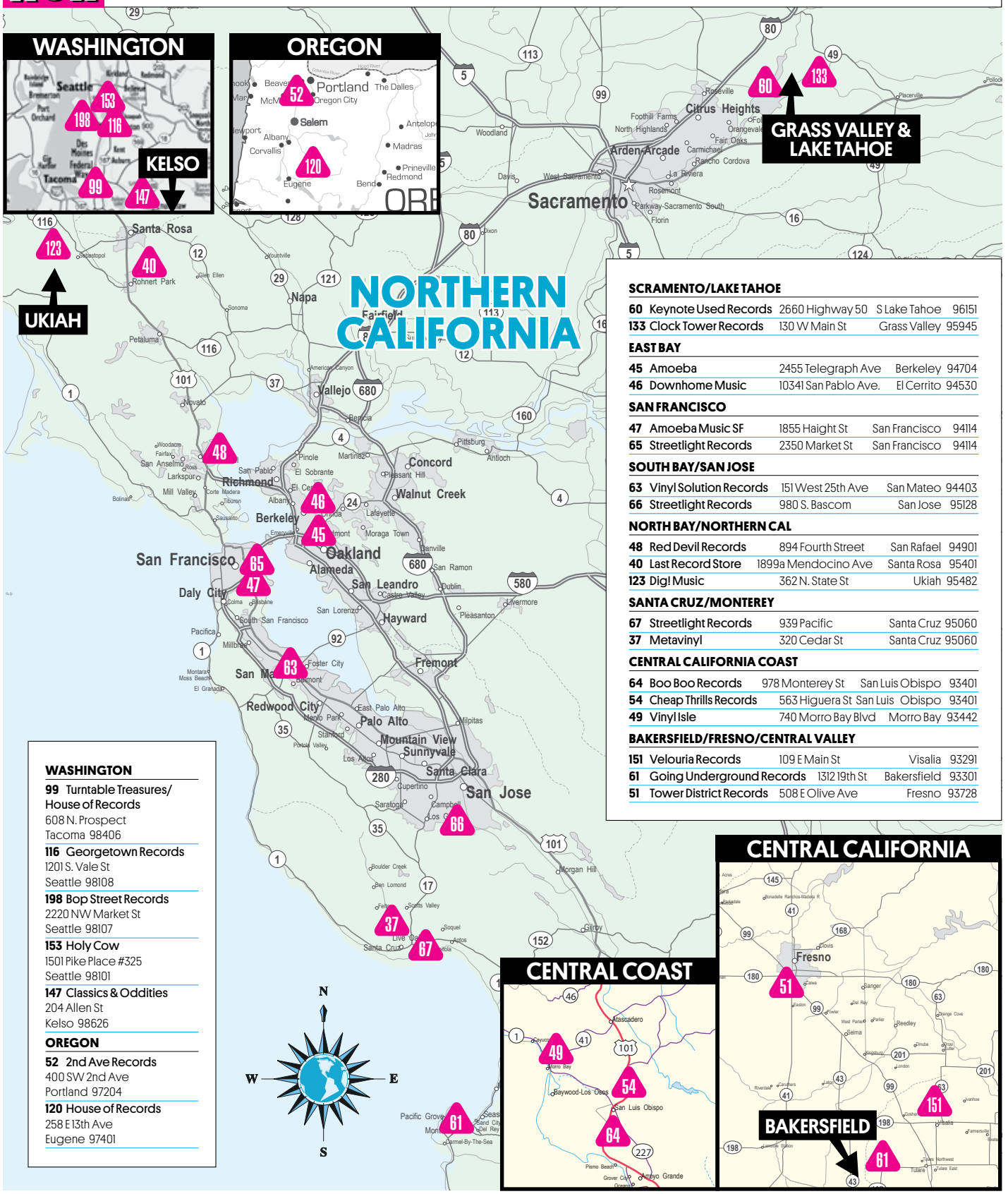
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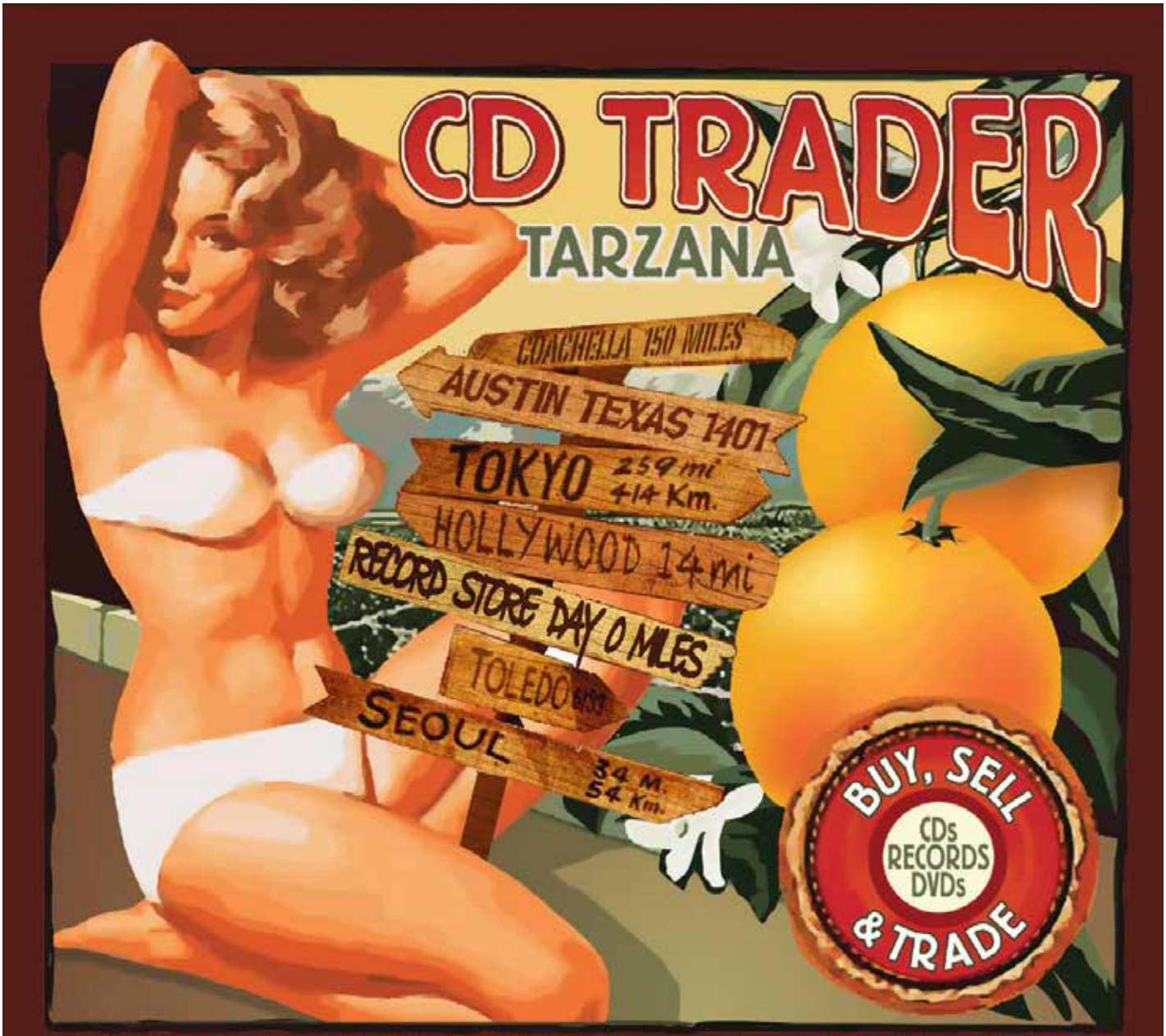

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Record Store Rockin' in Portlandia

Take a tour through Portland, Oregon's thriving record store scene

BY JAMES R. BEACH

A LITTLE ABOUT ME: BORN IN Portland, Oregon in 1969. My first LP was KISS Alive 2 after seeing them in 1977 at age 7. By 1981, I was collecting records. In the late '70s and early '80s, there were many record stores in the Portland area. Of those older stores, only a few remain today. But in recent years, a bunch of new stores have opened. Portland is thriving once again for vinyl!

A good first stop is downtown. Around the corner from the Morrison Bridge is...

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everydaymusic.com

Everyday Music is a must hit. Independently owned, with six stores overall (in Oregon and Washington). They have a large stock of both new and used LPs, 45s, 12" singles, CDs, Cassettes, VHS, DVDs, laserdiscs and more. Lots of bargains and they put stuff out daily. (Hours: 11-11 and open 7 days a week).

FYI: Just a couple blocks away is **Powell's Books,** which takes up an entire city block and five floors. They've even have their own coffee place right inside the store.

Once you get done shopping downtown, you could head out to the Everyday's at 3920 SW. Cedar Hills Blvd in Beaverton or else jump over to the eastside. I suggest that as there are more stores clustered in the SE, NE and N areas.

Follow Burnside to where it splits off. A couple blocks after you merge onto Sandy is Voodoo Donuts. The line may be long, as it is very popular, but worth the wait. Just up the street is another...

EVERYDAY MUSIC

1931 NE. Sandy Blvd.
Portland, OR. 97
(503) 239 - 7610
everydaymusic.com

Over 100,000 new and used LPs, 45s, CDs, Cassettes, movies and more and takes up half of a city block like the downtown store does (usually better parking at this one, and free). Daily dump bins and tons of cheapos. Big Record Store Day participant too. (Hours: 11-11 and open 7 days a week)

FUTURE SHOCK

1914 E. Burnside
Portland, OR. 97214
(503) 327-8473
futureshockpdx.com

Head south on 20th after leaving Everyday's, and right next to Plaid Pantry is Future Shock. A newer, little store that has a small section of vinyl along with toys, apparel and more. (Hours: 11-9 daily).

SMUT (SO MANY UNIQUE TREASURES)

7 SE. 28th
Portland, OR. 97217
(503) 235-SMUT
smutportland.blogspot.com

Before you get to Music Millennium, there's a fun little store just around the corner on 28th. SMUT has a good, small vinyl section, 45s, 8-tracks, cassettes, and a large selection of magazines, books, posters, clothing and more. (Hours: M- Sat 12-7; Sun 11-6)

MUSIC MILLENNIUM

3158 E. Burnside
Portland, OR. 97214
(503) 231 - 8926
musicmillennium

Music Millennium is the oldest record store in Portland and still one of the best. Opened in 1969 by Don and Loreen Macleod and brother-in-law Dan Lissy. Starting out with an 800-square-foot location, they eventually took up the whole building (and another store in the NW, now closed). Terry Currier started there in 1982 and is still manager. The vinyl section now inhabits the original 800-square-foot area itself. All kinds of new and used vinyl and they get stuff in frequently. Large section of CDs, movies, music videos and more. (Hours: M-Sat 10-10; Sun 11-9)

From there I'd suggest heading south, so you can make a circle and head back up to North and Northeast Portland. First stop is Belmont with a couple stores worth checking out.

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BLYTHE & BENNETT RECORDS
3334 SE. Belmont St.
Portland, OR. 97214
(503) 234 - 6996
blytheandbennett.com

Good new store with reasonable prices and a good selection. (Hours: Daily 12-8)

SONIC RECOLLECTIONS
2701 SE. Belmont St.
Portland, OR. 97214
(503) 236 - 3050
sonicrec.com

Around since the mid-1980s, just down the street from some great restaurants and coffee shops, around 34th street. 75,000 LPs and a bunch of 45s, CDs and more. Found my first William Shatner LP there many years ago. (Hours: T-Sat 12-6. Closed Sun & Mon)

From there, go west to 17th Ave.

DISCOURAGE ROCK & ROLL
1737 SE. Morrison St.
Portland, OR. 97214
(503) 528 - 1093
discouragerecords.com

If you're into Punk Rock this is the place for you. They also have a bunch of Metal, New Wave, Electronic, Noise, Glam and more. Refurbished Stereo equipment too. (Hours: T-Sat 12-7; Sun on occasion/randomly)

Head down to 12th, take a left and go South. When you get to Hawthorne take a left. Head East until you get to...

CROSSROADS
3130-B SE. Hawthorne Blvd.
Portland, OR. 97214
(503) 232 - 1767

Crossroads is a must stop for sure! Opened in 1993 by Dave Clingman, Eric Swedeberg and Thomas Jones (who also puts on the Eugene Record Collectors show) bought the building and launched the only co-op/antique mall-type Record store in the NW. Be prepared to spend a few hours there as they have 35–40 dealers any given month and have over 50,000 LPs, 20,000 45s, a bunch of CDs, Posters, Stereos and more. (Hours: M-T 11-6; F-Sat 11-7; Sun 12-6)

JACKPOT RECORDS
3574 SE. Hawthorne Blvd.
Portland, OR. 97214
(503) 239 - 7561
jackpotrecords.com

Just up the street from Crossroads is Jackpot. A decent selection of LPs and 45s is mixed with some CDs. Good variety and reasonable prices. (Hours: M-T 10-7, F-Sat 10-8; Sun 11-6)

CD GAME EXCHANGE
1428 SE. 36th Street
Portland, OR. 97214
(503) 233 - 1708
cdgameexchange.com

Right across the street is a CD Game Exchange. A small section of vinyl amongst the CDs, DVDs and Videogames to dig through, but some bargains to be found here and there.

EXILED RECORDS
4628 SE. Hawthorne Blvd.
Portland, OR. 97215
(503) 232 - 0751

Heading east up Hawthorne a little ways and you have Exiled Records. They have a good selection of LPs, CDs and tapes. They also publish a free pamphlet, "Portland Guide to Independent Record Stores" that even includes a map on the back. (Hours: T-Sat 11-7; Sun 12-5)

Once you leave, head up to 49th Avenue and take a right. Go south until you come to Powell Blvd. where it meets Foster. Go straight through and on your right is...

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VARIETY SHOP
4932 SE. Foster
Portland, OR. 97206
(503) 775 - 2210

An interesting newer store with thousands of LPs, DVDs, VHS Tapes, Cassettes, CDs and more. Reasonable prices and he's always having outdoor sales. (Hours: Daily 10-7)

GREEN NOISE/DIRTNAP RECORDS
3840 SE. Gladstone Street
Portland, OR. 97202
(503) 736 - 0909
greennoiserecords.com

Get back on Powell Blvd and head west. Take a left at Cesar Chavez/39th Ave and go south to Gladstone. On your right is Green Noise Records, also the home of the Dirtnap Records label. Another specialist in Punk Rock. (Hours: M-Sat 12-8; Sun 12-5).

Head back north to Powell on Cesar Chavez/39th and take a left. When you get to 26th by Cleveland High School take a right and go north a few blocks.

CLINTON STREET RECORD & STEREO
2510 SE. Clinton Street
Portland, OR. 97202
(503) 235 - 5323

Just around the corner from the Clinton Street Theater, home of the long-running midnight *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. A small store, they nevertheless pack it with vinyl and stereo equipment and put new stuff out almost daily. (Hours: T-Sun 1-7 ; closed Mondays).

Once you leave, head south back to Powell. Take a right and head west. Just before Ross Island bridge, take the McLoughlin exit and get on Hwy 99 north. You can take that all the way on up to the NE. and N. Portand stores. Keep going north a couple miles until you get to Morrison Street. There's an I-5 north entrance there just past the entrance to the bridge to downtown you can get on.

From I-5, get off at the Alberta exit and go right. Turn onto Mississippi and go south until you hit...

CD GAME EXCHANGE
3719 N. Mississippi
Portland, OR. 9722
(503) 287 - 0382
cdgameexchange.com

Not a huge amount of vinyl, just a bin and some cheapos in a couple spots. Some good bargains to be had though, and a bunch of CDs, DVDs and games too. (Hours:

MISSISSIPPI RECORDS
5202 N. Albina
Portland, OR. 97227
(503) 282 - 2990

Opened by Eric Isaacson 11 years ago, Mississippi Records is definitely a good one to visit. A nice mix of new and used LPs and 45s and always some bargains to be had. (Hours: Daily 12-7)

TURN! TURN! TURN!
8 NE. Killingsworth
Portland, OR. 97211
(503) 284 - 6019

A newer store just up the street is Turn! Turn! Turn! They have an interesting selection of LPs and also books and zines too. And a variety of beers on tap. (Hours: Tues-Thurs 1-10; F 1-12; 12-12; Sun 12-7).

Once you get done, head back south to Alberta and take a left. Go a couple miles to 28th.

LITTLE AXE RECORDS
5012 NE. 28th Ave.
Portland, OR. 97211
(503) 320 - 3656

You'll find this newer store behind a great little bakery. Owners Warren and Jed Bindeman occupy a front room of a house just off Alberta. A great selection of Alternative, Punk, Metal, Dance, New Wave LPs and more.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39

Cassettes too. (Hours: W-M 12-6; closed Tuesdays).

JUMP JUMP MUSIC
7005 NE. Prescott
Portland, OR. 97218
(503) 284 - 4828

Go south from Alberta on 33rd Ave. to Prescott. A good ways up is Jump Jump Music owned by Night Owl Record Show co-founder Dan Berkman. Packed with Jazz, Soul, Funk, Rock, World Music and other LPs.

Now if you're still up for a bit more, backtrack to I-5. Go north and get off at Lombard. Head all the way down until you get close to the St. John Bridge. There's a little store worth checking out.

VINYL RESTING PLACE
8332 N. Lombard
Portland, OR. 97203
(503) 247 - 9573

This one's been around since 1997 and although it's off the beaten path, worth a stop. A small store packed with mostly LPS and some 45s, CDs and even some music books on the shelf. Large section of Soundtracks as well. (Hours: Tues-Sat 10-6; Sun 10-5)

Head back to the freeway once again. If you have more time, head north as there are a couple worth checking out within an hour's drive. Right in downtown Vancouver is a cool little store...

EVERYBODY'S MUSIC
2312 Main Street
Vancouver, WA. 98660
(360) 750 - 7348

No relation to the Everyday Music's, owner Brian Wassman is a musician and longtime record swap dealer/shopper. He launched the store in 1992 as Recycled Sounds and after a couple of name changes is still going strong. A good selection of vinyl, CDs, cassettes, DVDs, VHS movies and more. (Hours: M-F 10-7; Sat 9-8; Sun 12-6)

CLASSICS & ODDITIES
201 Allen Street
Kelso, WA. 98626
(360) 747 - 2393

If you have even more time, in Kelso is my good friend Corey Strite's store, Classics & Oddities. (It's about 40 miles north of downtown Vancouver) Recently celebrating five years, Classics has a great section of LPs, 45s, CDs, cassettes, 8-tracks and laserdiscs to compliment an extensive selection of vintage videogames and systems, movies, toys and more. Prices are great and new stuff going out daily. He and I also partnered up in 2013 to launch the annual Kelso Record Show.

So there you have it! A tour of Portland Record stores (and even a slight detour if you wish). There are a couple I didn't mention as they are small and off the beaten path, but feel free to check them out. (A CD Game Exchange in Gresham and a Budget Tapes & Records in Hillsboro). Oh and you might want to bring an umbrella.

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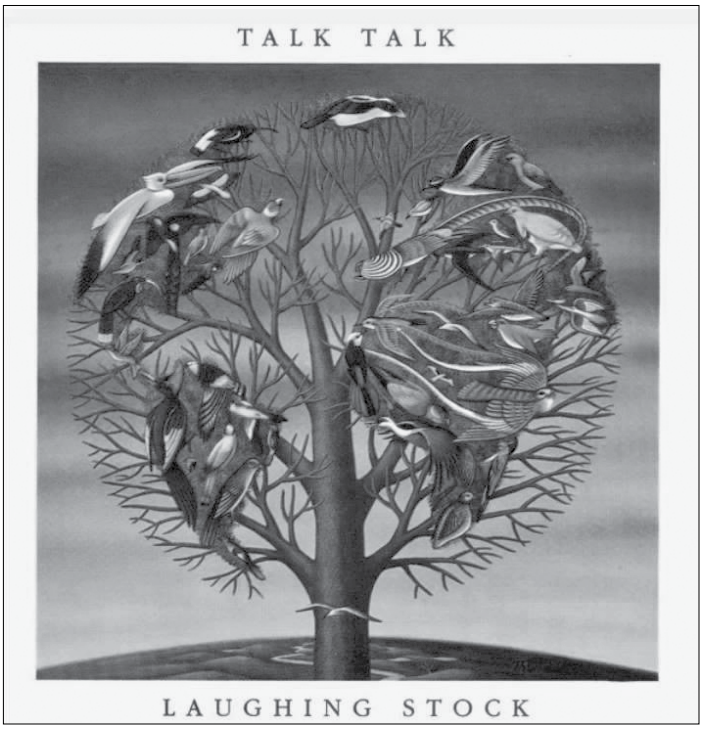
Something Old, Something New

Revisiting Talk Talk's Laughingstock *and new music from Unconcious Collective and Blind God Idiot*

TALK TALK
Laughing Stock
(1991, Verve)



MANY KNOW TALK TALK'S FIRST three albums, which had hits like "It's My Life" and "Life's What You Make It." But Talk Talk made five albums, each one better then the last and then quit at the top of their art. Surprisingly few know the bands last two albums: *The Spirit of Eden* and *Laughing Stock*. With these two last albums Talk Talk proved that less is indeed more.

After Talk Talk's third album, *The Color of Spring*, the band took years to make *The Spirit of Eden*, a huge departure from their earlier albums. Their music had evolved into a mix of jazz and rock, and Mark Hollis' gorgeous voice was now only part of the soundscape. Mark started to use his voice as an instrument to blend with the other instruments. It was no longer a dominant force as in a conventional band where the instruments back the lead singer.

If you want easy listening pop with predictable rhythms and dime-a-dozen lyrics, don't read any further. Talk Talk's fifth album *Laughing Stock* doesn't come easy. And if you intend to play *Laughing Stock* as background music streaming from your mp3, then do us all a favor, keep your pennies and don't insult the band's efforts. *Laughing Stock* is like a great woman; you need to really pay attention. The seemingly sparse and simple music, has layer upon layer, that took me years to fully appreciate and the album only gets better and better after each listen and with each passing year.

Laughing Stock is the band's greatest effort and arguable the greatest album of all time, only slightly ahead of Talk Talk's previous album, *The Spirit of Eden*. This sublime album only has six tracks that vary widely in tempo, energy and style, yet somehow it remains a coherent whole and should be listened to in one sitting. I did not grasp or even really like this album when I first heard it, and put it aside, only listening occasionally, until I sat down and listened seriously. Suddenly a veil lifted and the sweet music and Mark's magical voice revealed its secrets. The music is filled with silences, harmonic distortion and shifts in tempo and intensity. Sometimes Mark's voice is so low, so soft, you're unsure if it's an instrument or him, until suddenly his voice erupts with full force, making you wonder how any human voice can scream at the top of their lungs, and contain all the power and dynamics, yet sound harmonic and clear without any discord — astounding! His voice is like roaring waterfall, yet his it always sounds pleasing no matter how hard he seems to press — like warm honey running down the soft skin of a gorgeous woman.

The lyrics are complex and often hard to hear. Clearly Mark and band weren't thinking "cash." They set out to create musical artistry regardless of financial gain and they succeeded. They did not make much money — and it is art! *Laughing Stock*'s opening track "Myrrhman" is quiet and subdued, but give it time and its quiet intensity will overwhelm you. "After The Flood" has the coolest organ that grinds and ebbs with Mark's vocal eruptions that will envelop you in the most rhythmical pleasing percussion that goes on and on, until unfortunately it has to end after 9 minutes and 38 seconds. "New Grass," my current favorite, makes me believe in a better life, where beauty and art mean more than money, and hope springs eternal. Buy this album today! Turn off your iPhone and sit down with your significant other or send them away and listen! You won't be sorry. *Laughing Stock* might turn out to be one of your most prized possessions. It's the one album I would bring to a deserted island if it had a working turntable.

—BYLINE

Rating: ★★★★★★

UNCONSCIOUS COLLECTIVE
Pleistocene Moon
2xLP (Tofu Carnage Records)

IN THIS POST-EVERYTHING MUSIcal era, it's still possible to be surprised by new music. Dallas trio Unconscious Collective's uncompromising blend of jazz, prog and punk idioms is both deeply personal and archetypically potent, and they're captured at their best on sophomore double-LP *Pleistocene Moon*.

Most of this music stays close to jazz head/solo forms, though the heads tend to be nimble figures that recall John McLaughlin's work in Mahavishnu Orchestra, and the solo sections transform into intense guitar/bass/drum improvisations in the harmolodic tradition of fellow Texan Ornette Coleman. The band displays both incredible virtuosity and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

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RECORD REVIEWS

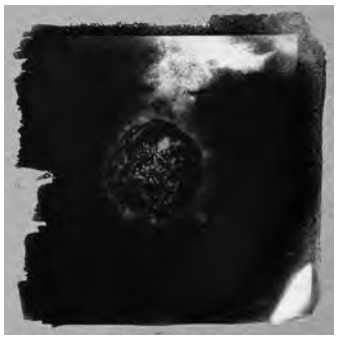
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 42

the reckless abandon of primordial noise/punk, balanced by subtler passages appearing at perfect moments. Saxophonist Mike Forbes appears on half of the album, bringing the climax of pieces like "Requiem for Biodiversity" to heights not heard since the days of Last Exit.

The album opener and closer introduce even more wild influences, creating ominous, ritualistic vibes. The title track opens the album with textures of wind, distant wolves and ritual chanting, gradually coalescing into a heavy riff that evokes the dark atmospheres of bands like Guapo or Univers Zero. And album closer "Greedy Tongues" is mostly a solo coil-spring percussion piece, bathed in deep reverb and modulating delay effects. Recalling the early industrial percussion work of folks like Z'EV, the piece offers a unique end to a complex album. If you're up for some deep musical contemplation, *Pleistocene Moon* proves to be as rewarding as it is demanding.

–SCOTT SCHOLZ

Rating: ★★★★



BLIND IDIOT GOD
Before Ever After
2xLP (Indivisible Music)

It's been 23 years since the last record from instrumental power trio Blind Idiot God, but you wouldn't know it listening to the new double LP, "Before Ever After." Their blend of aggressive rock and dub, infused with a harmonic vocabulary that draws from modern classical influences, sounds as fresh, unique and forward thinking as it did in decades past.

Founding members Andy Hawkins (guitar) and Gabe Katz (bass) sound as confident and telepathically connected as ever and new member Tim Wyskida (Khanate) fits in perfectly behind the drum kit, whether driving the band toward forceful climaxes or breezy dubplate atmospheres.

While Blind Idiot God continues to unearth musical riches in familiar terrain, "Before Ever After" also exhibits evolution along several fronts. Blues influences surface more frequently this time around in numbers like "Fub" and "Earthmover." On the opposite side of the stylistic spectrum, pieces like "Voice of the Structure" embrace an almost electroacoustic approach. Few bands can move from Stockhausen to brutal prog to blues in three tunes, but it works beautifully here. And Andy Hawkins' guitar tones have matured into some of the best-sounding guitars ever captured on wax.

Bill Laswell renews his post as producer, pursuing more of a live band sound than 1992's "Cyclotron." With lots of dynamic range left in the mix, this is an album meant to be played as loud as possible, though you'll never match the legendary stage volume of this band at home. But lose yourself in the gorgeous triple-gatefold artwork by Seldon Hunt for a while, and have fun trying.

–SCOTT SCHOLZ

Rating: ★★★★★

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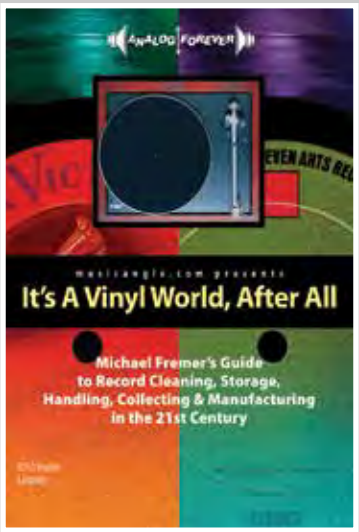

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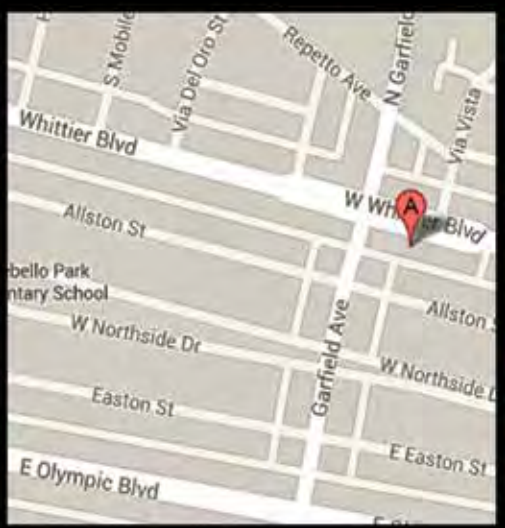

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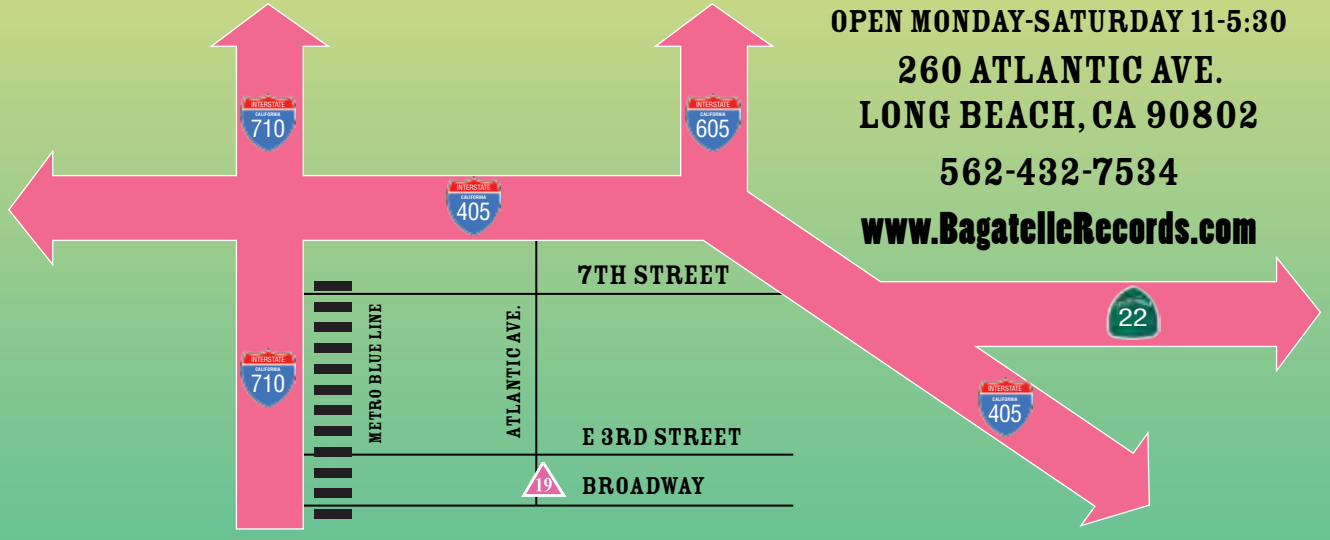

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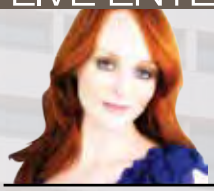

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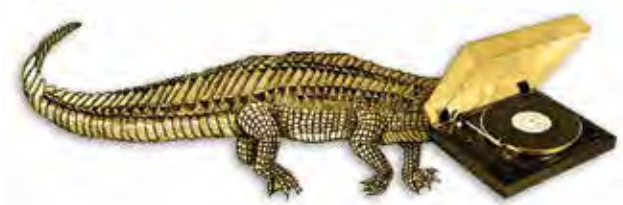
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CES 2015

BY PETER VANROSENDAEL

AND YOU MAY FIND YOURSELFLIVINGINANOTHER PART OF THE WORLD, AND YOU MAY FIND YOURSELF BEHIND THE WHEEL OF A LARGE AUTOMOBILE, AND YOU MAY ASK YOURSELF , HOW DID I GET HERE?

—Talking Heads 1981.

WELL, HOW DID WE get to this vinyl here? Let's get into Mr. Peabody's way back machine and return to only a dozen years ago. CES 2003 was one of noted absences, i.e. the cell phone being nowhere near the ubiquitous convenience (monster?) that it is today. For a mere $5.00 you could rent one for the day.

So what does that have to do with CES 2015? Well for one thing, High End Audio has made the Big Time and in now 30 floors up in the Venetian and a world away (both symbolically and literally) from the Alexis Park. But more importantly, the lack of change in the mental aspect of our hobby was palpable in the rooms with turntables.

People, let's face it, there is no simple way to play a record and thus enjoy music, when comparing that to the convenience of pushing a few buttons on the cloud machine. Trying to make it real, compared to what? The only starting point in our pursuit of vinyl nirvana is the turntable.

The entry level is loaded with plenty of choices. Music-Hall, Project, Rega, and Audio Technica are all on the menu, as is AVID's newest addition, the Ingenium. Also new this year are direct drive turntables from Onkyo and Pioneer, which are sure to find a niche.

Believe me when I say I've heard it all. My friend says this is a good table, and he's got better ears than me; or; Most reviewers liked it, so I'll buy it; or; it's sooo pretty.

The point here is that when buying/upgrading you must audition. Would you buy a car without a test drive? Would you buy some ocean shore property in Florida, or a bridge in New York, sight unseen? Find a reliable dealer and ask a lot of questions. This will take some homework but can result in much less buyer's remorse. Even the resurgence of vinyl can be skewed with the interpretation on the statistics. Recently posted sales of two million units (turntables) don't tell the real facts of "where do you draw the line". Technically, those all-in-one players, (amp, speakers, table, radio in one box) are considered a unit and indeed, I did gift one such device to my 14 year old Grandson, but it's not something for me, despite the diamond needle.n.b. measured tracking forces on such units vary from 6 to 10 grams. If these tables do nothing more than introduce a new generation to vinyl, then they will have immensely succeeded.

Music is not a convenient truth. It's not convenient to be first in line at the box office only to be told best available is 200 rows back. It's not convenient to prep a record for play (clean LP and Stylus, de-static etc), much less keep a library (vertical stack, crates, plastic outers/inners etc). It's not convenient, the cost of procuring vinyl, both new and used.

The question then remains: why will the LP record be the last man standing in the archives? The simplest solution to saving time and money in our daily lives is to not buy shoes that need polishing, and not but pants that need a crease, and cut your own hair, and not buy music at any price when it's free on the ewe tube. Live long and prosper with the analog.

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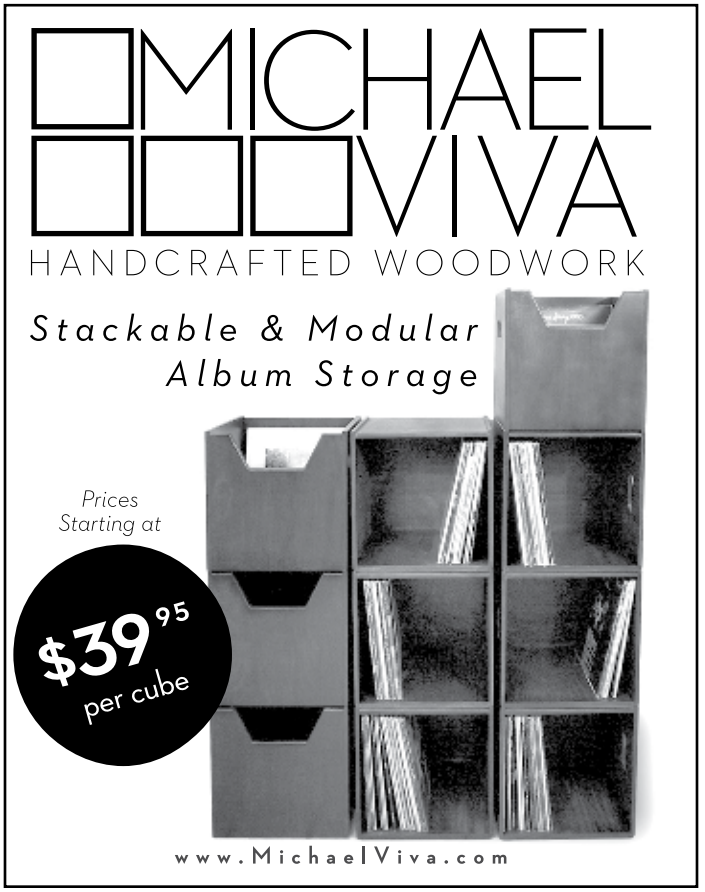

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DO YOU REMEMBER THE ESP Concert Grand SI, designed by legendary speaker designer Sean McCaughan? We do! To this day ESP remains a reference speaker to many who know them. Apparently Sean McCaughan is back in the states and he has not been idle. At RMAF, he told us that he has dramatically changed two existing models, the Bodhrans and the Concert Grand SI and created three new speakers and a complete line of cables.

We heard the ESP Cello — a gorgeous 2-way stand-mount in Indian Applewood. After listening, it quickly reminded one of how good ESP speakers are. The Cello does not come cheap, but then great world-class speakers never do. The Cello offers people without big rooms or really deep wallets the ability to get an ESP speaker in a stand-mount version. It's the kind of speaker that makes you forget about time and chores by evoking powerful emotions and simply reproduces music as it was meant to sound. For those needing full bass extension, a separate bass module, Bassoon, can be bought. It fits under the Cello, eliminating the need for stands (see pictures).

You owe it to yourself to listen to the Cello. The ESP Cello sets a new standard in stand-mount speakers! We found the ESP Cello to have a lush and rich, yet natural and accurate midrange. It's musical and evocative with harmonic balance throughout the frequency range, without causing any listener fatigue. Which makes us wonder at just how amazing the bigger ESP models must be. Wildly recommended!

Mr. McCaughan hinted he might bring the ESP Cello to the T.H.E. Show, Newport 2015.

ESP Cello: $11,995 ($12,995 with ESP stands). Four other models exist. US distributor: www.audioskies.com

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Haden and Hall: Duet Masters Together

BY ARMAND LEWIS

SOME MUSICAL PARTNERSHIPS are simply meant to be, even though they may not be long term. Some come together early in their musical careers, like Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, only to separate leaving a lasting legacy as they pursue their own paths. Others may take years to unite, even though in retrospect, it may seem an obvious pairing. Even more so if both partners have been traveling the same path for years before getting together.

Bassist Charlie Haden and guitarist Jim Hall could not have had more different backgrounds. Haden was born in Missouri in 1937 to a family of country musicians, where he became part of the family act at an early age. By the 1950s, he had made his way to Los Angeles, where he played bass with a number of local jazz groups; eventually joining up with Ornette Coleman just as the saxophonist was heading for New York.

Later, Haden would lead and play with a number of groups, including his own quartets and large ensemble Liberation Music Orchestra. By the 1970s, Haden would start to make albums consisting entirely of duets with other freedom-minded musicians, including Archie Shepp, Alice Coltrane and his mentor Ornette Coleman. Later duet albums would feature the bassist along with pianist Hampton Hawes, pianist Hank Jones, as well as an album with guitarist Pat Metheney.

Jim Hall would spend much of his later career making duet albums as well, though he would come to the form via an entirely different route. Born in Buffalo New York in 1930, Hall would also find his way to Los Angeles in the mid-1950s, where he played with drummer Chico Hamilton's groups. This led to his first trio LP on Pacific Jazz entitled simply *Jazz Guitar* (1957).

In 1962, Hall teamed up with pianist Bill Evans to create the classic *Undercurrent* LP. Instrumental jazz duet albums where a rarity at the time, but both player's subtle shading and gentle lyrical interplay made this one of the finest modern jazz albums ever made.

The 1960s found Hall serving as a sideman to Ella Fitzgerald, then Sonny Rollins and later Paul Desmond. When Hall finally began leading his own sessions in the early 1970s, the albums that followed included several duet recordings including sessions with bassists Ron Carter ("Alone Together" 1972), Red Mitchell ("Jim Hall & Red Mitchell" 1978) and pianist George Shearing ("First Edition" 1981).

By the time Haden and Hall found themselves performing together at the Montreal Jazz Festival in July 1990, recording a duet performance was long overdue. Now, finally, the newly revived Impulse label has released that meeting as simply *Charlie Haden – Jim Hall* (Impulse B002176502).

Thelonious Monk's compositions have always straddled the line between modern (bop) and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 58

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 56

avant-garde styles. With their intricate, angular constructions, tunes such as the opener on this album "Bemsha Swing," showcase the soloist's skill and dexterity.

Ornette Coleman's "Turnaround" starts off with an almost "Monk-ish" opening, before resolving into a vehicle for Hall's spare, direct lines with Haden content to "walk" the bass in support for much of the tune.

Hall's "Down From Antigua" has a strong Spanish feel, which makes sense as Hall had a affinity for Spanish guitar – specifically Joaquin Rodrigo's "Conierto de Aranguez," which Hall famously recorded for CTI Records in the mid 1970s. By reducing the amplification, Hall had an amazing ability to make his electric guitar sound almost acoustic and here the resulting sound is rich and vibrant.

Haden's "In the Moment" comes close to the avant-garde Free-Jazz approach of his time with Ornette Coleman — especially in the growling support given Hall's extra spare guitar lines throughout. Here Haden's roving, fluid basslines behind and sometimes in contrast to the lead guitar make this challenging music accessible.

This would not be the last time these two masters would record in the duet format. Charlie Haden would record a duet album with guitarist Pat Metheney (*Under the Missouri Sky* 1996), while Jim Hall would record his own duet album with Metheney three years later (*Jim Hall and Pat Metheney* – 1999).

Hall and Haden's final duet recording would come in 2001, when Haden would appear on Hall's *Jim Hall and Basses* (2001), which features the guitarist in duets with several of jazz's most well known bass players.

While all of the aforementioned records are easily recommended, this new release is probably the fullest expression of the duet format the two musicians produced.

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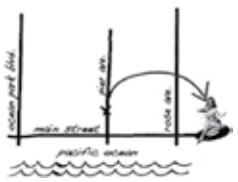

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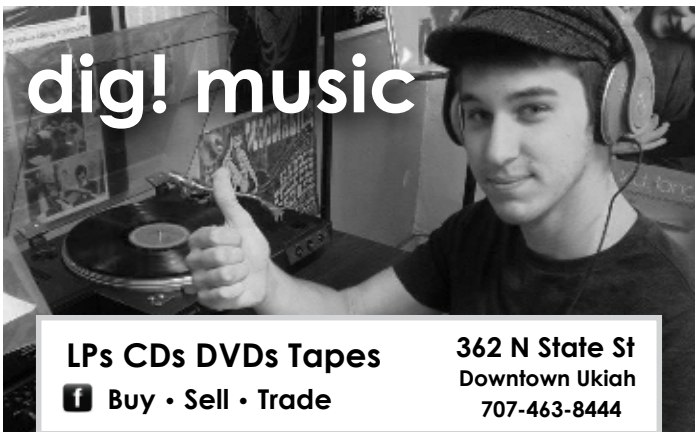

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1953-2015

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From working with Phil Spector, to recording Frank Sinatra, Ray Charles, Tony Bennett, Gladys Knight, Keith Richards and countless other artists, Kirk's extraordinary talent and friendly disposition, were sought after industry wide.

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RCN THE RECORD SHOW CALENDAR

Calendar listings are free and printed on a space available basis. Unsolicited materials cannot be returned. Please contact conventions to verify the information! Send your calendar listings to ***Record Collector News***: jim@recordcollectornews.com

SUNDAY APRIL 5

Pasadena, CA. Pasadena City College Flea Market and Record Swap. 1570 E Colorado Blvd. Pasadena. 8am-3pm. FREE admission. Parking $2

SATURDAY APRIL 11

Chicago, IL. CHIRP Record Fair & Other Delights. Plumber's Union Hall, 1340 W. Washington. $10. 8am-7pm. 312-636-2691

Portland, OR. Night Owl Record Show. 4904 SE Hawthorne. $2. 5pm-9pm. 503-284-4828

SUNDAY APRIL 19

San Francisco, CA. KUSF Rock N' Swap. University of San Francisco McLaren Center 2130 Fulton St. $3. 10am-4pm. 415-386-5873

SUNDAY APRIL 26

Seattle WA. Lake City Record Show. Lake City Community Center, 12531 28th NE. Free. 10am-4pm. 206-850-1588

Buena Park, CA. Greater Orange County Record Show. UFCW Union Hall – 8530 Stanton Ave. $3. 10am-3pm. 626-665-4448

FRIDAY MAY 1

Brooklyn NY. WFMU Record Fair. Brooklyn Expo center. 79 Franklin St. $7. 4pm-10pm 201-521-1416

SATURDAY MAY 2

Brooklyn NY. WFMU Record Fair. Brooklyn Expo center. 79 Franklin St. $7. 10am-7pm. 201-521-1416

SUNDAY MAY 3

Pasadena, CA. Pasadena City College Flea Market and Record Swap. 1570 E Colorado Blvd. Pasadena. 8am-3pm. FREE admission. Parking $2

Brooklyn NY. WFMU Record Fair. Brooklyn Expo center. 79 Franklin St. $7. 10am-7pm. 201-521-1416

SATURDAY MAY 16

Skokie IL. Midwest Classical Show. Holiday Inn 5300 W. Touhy Ave. $2. 10am-4pm. 847-381-5820

SUNDAY MAY 17

Newark, CA. Newark Record Swap Meet. Newark Pavilion 6430 Thornton. $3.50 7am-1pm. 408-263-5127

Hillside, IL. Chicagoland Record Collectors Show. 4400 Frontage Rd. $3. 9am-4pm. 630-898-1533

FRIDAY MAY 22

Austin TX. Spring Austin Record Convention. Palmer Auditorium. $5. 10am-6pm. 512-288-7288

SATURDAY MAY 23

Olympia WA. Olympia Record Show. 1818 4th Ave E. $3. 3pm-7pm. 360-357- 4775

Austin TX. Spring Austin Record Convention. Palmer Auditorium. $5. 10am-6pm. 512-288-7288

SUNDAY MAY 24

Austin TX. Spring Austin Record Convention. Palmer Auditorium. $5. 10am-6pm. 512-288-7288

THUR MAY 28 – SUN MAY 31

Newport Beach CA. THE Show Newport. Hotel Irvine. Hundreds of world class audio manufacturers and dealers from around the globe. Live Entertainment. Lots of high end and collectable vinyl!, theshownewport.com

SUNDAY MAY 31

Buena Park, CA . Greater Orange County Record Show. UFCW Union Hall – 8530 Stanton Ave. $3. 10am-3pm. 626-665-4448

SUNDAY JUNE 7

Pasadena, CA. Pasadena City College Flea Market and Record Swap. 1570 E Colorado Blvd. Pasadena. 8am-3pm. FREE admission. Parking $2 Allentown PA. Record Show. 1901 S 12th St. $3. 10am-4pm. 610-530-7606

Tacoma WA. 16th Annual Vinyl Record Meet. VFW Post #91. 2000 S Union Ave. $3. 10am-5pm. 253-627-1342

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